

INTEGRATED TRAINING AREA MANAGEMENT
ITAM Learning Module
Tactical Units & Equipment

Lesson #4: Staff Organizations

Objectives

To achieve a successful ITAM program, land managers must understand the primary tactical missions and training requirements of the units that use their installation and training/testing lands. This Lesson is the fourth part of a four-part learning module that will help students to learn more about the Army, its organization and missions.

By completing this Lesson, students will:

1. Identify the purpose behind a tactical staff.
2. Recognize the coordinating (or principal) staff officers and their functions.
3. Recognize the importance of the special staff.
4. Recognize the personal staff structure
5. Identify the Command Sergeant Major's (CSM) unique personal staff role.

Introduction

The Guiding Staff Principle:

“The General Staff is intended to convert the ideas of the Commanding General into orders, not only by conveying the former to the troops, but far more by working out all the necessary matters of detail, thus relieving the mind of the General from a great amount of unnecessary trouble.”

Karl Von Clausewitz
19th Century Military Philosopher

Early warfare was simple: one leader could see his entire war party at all times. He knew every single person and had a sole focus. Through time as technology improved weapons, civilizations created nations, and knowledge exceeded the bounds of local villages, warfare became increasingly complex.

Military leaders could no longer directly conduct the business of raising and leading an army. Specialists were employed to help with the “details,” such as feeding and quartering troops, paying troops, or moving troops.

At first, only generals had staffs (hence the term “general staff” in the quote above). Today’s complex battlefield with its multi-ton tanks, cannon ranges of 25km or more, and need for large quantities of fuel and munitions has pushed the need for a fixed staff down to battalion-level.

Paraphrasing Clausewitz’s earlier statement in simpler terms:

A Staff will...

- Coordinate
- Anticipate
- Verify
- Assist
- Gather
- Inform
- Prepare
- Estimate
- Convey
- Advise
- Recommend

So the Commander can....

- Decide
- Guide

In an ideal situation, the commander gives guidance and direction on a pressing matter. The staff then does all the background work, research, preparations, or estimations for the commander’s intent. When the staff is ready, it prepares a recommendation to the commander and awaits his decision.

This not a new or foreign concept. Organizational-style leadership and staffs are not unique to the military. This same process is used in government, business, and corporations worldwide.

The uniqueness comes from the way military staffs are all similar in structure at every echelon of command, from Army to Battalion level.

Broad staff functions

A military tactical staff (one found in an MTOE “warfighting” unit) is organized around the six broad-ranging functions shown below. Each of these functions will be described in detail at a later time in this lesson.

Six Broad Functions:

1. Personnel
2. Intelligence
3. Operations and Training
4. Logistics
5. Civil-Military Operations
6. Communications & Electronics

Each of these functions has a related Battlefield Operating System that it supports. (Some functions support multiple BOSes.) Additionally, each broad function may control or have oversight over specialty sections (those with very narrow or focused functions) within its functional area.

Later, you will see how this grouping leads to titles of individual officers in-charge of each staff section.

First, however, we will discuss some unique characteristics of a tactical staff.

Command authority

The basic purpose of a tactical staff at any level is highlighted below.

Purpose:

- A single, cohesive group
- Assists the Commander in
 - Preparing orders
 - Disseminating orders
 - Evaluating order compliance
- Has no command authority
- Exists to serve
 - The Commander
 - Subordinate commanders

A staff is a cohesive group of individuals who oversee a particular specialty function. The staff monitors their area diligently, but also keeps abreast of other functions as well, since many

functions are interdependent. (A plan to move troops by truck is not a plan if no trucks are available.)

The staff works directly for the commander, but it has no command authority. In other words, the staff cannot make major policy decisions and expect compliance -- unless the commander has approved it. Additionally, a staff cannot enforce compliance with directives. Enforcement is done through subordinate unit commanders.

Subordinate commanders may or may not have a staff of their own (such as a company within a battalion). In these cases, the staff lends its assistance and expertise to the subordinate unit commander.

Staff supervision

Staff Supervision:

- Process of advising other staff officers and individuals subordinate to the commander of the commander's plans and policies
- Interpreting the commander's plans and assisting subordinates in carrying out plans and policies
- Determining extent to which plans and are being carried out and advising commander on extent to which subordinate units are carrying out plans and policies

A staff's authority comes through the commander directly (by an approved policy or order) or indirectly through its supervisory functions.

Staff supervision encompasses the "behind-the-scenes" work and the hours put into preparing orders or plans. A typical 5-day battalion-level field exercise can encompass weeks or months of preparation and coordination. On a different scale, the plans for World War II's initial 1944 D-Day landings in France (a 36-hour event) were first started in early 1942.

The following quote provides an excellent summary on the importance of the staff and their work in preparing orders and plans for combat operations:

"Soldiers win battles, not staffs. However, there have been many battles lost by staffs long before the soldiers have begun to fight."

Staff Structure

There are three types of staffs you may see or hear about. A "joint" staff works for a commander who commands Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine forces. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), who advised the President and General Schwartzkopf's command during the Gulf War, are examples of a joint staff. A general staff (G) works for a commander in the grade of a General Officer (Army, Corps or Division). A special staff (S) works for a commander who is not a General Officer (brigade and battalion).

A staff consists of a personal staff group, a coordinating staff group (also known as the "primary" staff), a special ("secondary") staff group, and the executive officer. While this represents the typical unit's tactical staff structure, different kinds of commands modify this framework.

The executive officer (at battalion and brigade levels) or the chief-of-staff (at division or higher) supervises the day-to-day activities of the coordinating staff group and the special staff group. The coordinating staff is in charge of the six-broad functions mentioned earlier. This special staff group varies by unit type. The special staff group is in charge of "specialized" functions critical to the unit, such as surgical activities or engineer activities. The personal staff group is also unique to each unit. The personal staff group can directly assist and access the commander and does not have to go through the executive officer. Without synchronization, a staff section might act independently and not as part of the team -- a potentially dangerous action in a combat unit.

Below is a description of the coordinating staff group. The "S" designation is for a battalion or brigade staff officer. A "G" would replace the "S" at division or higher staff levels--denoting the position on a *general staff*.

S1/G1, Personnel Officer, Adjutant

The S1/G1 is the principal staff officer with responsibility for all matters concerning *human resources*...

- Unit strength maintenance & replacements
- Personnel services support (pay, medals, mail, etc.)
- Discipline, law and order
- Civilian personnel
- Administrative support
- Safety
- Headquarters management
- Also referred to as the "Adjutant"

The first principal staff officer of the coordinating staff we will talk about is the S1/G1. Any organization is made up of people. The S1/G1 is the staff officer concerned with meeting all the personnel needs.

At lower staff levels, the S1/G1 is referred to as the “Adjutant.” This term signifies the additional special role as executive assistant to the commander and executive officer. (On general staffs, a separate staff section, the Secretary of the General Staff (SGS) fills the adjutant role, but all other functions remain with the G1.)

S2/G2, Intelligence Officer

The second principal staff officer is the S2/G2, or the Intelligence Officer. The S2 section is devoted to a specific Battlefield Operating System (BOS) -- Intelligence. The S2/G2 is the principal staff officer with responsibility for all matters concerning *military intelligence*.

- Production of intelligence
 - acquires intelligence information and data:
 - enemy forces
 - weather
 - terrain
 - analyzes and evaluates that information
 - presents assessments and recommendations
- Counterintelligence
- Intelligence training (threats)

The S2/G2 section gathers and analyzes information and reformats it into usable tactical information called intelligence. The section is capable of producing its own intelligence or conferencing with other unit S2/G2s to expand their information pool.

The S2/G2 section also has staff supervisory functions in counterintelligence and operational security (OPSEC), both of which are designed to keep the enemy from gathering usable information on friendly forces.

S3/G3, Operations (or “Training”) Officer, TOC

The S3/G3 is the third principal staff officer. The S3/G3 is the principal staff officer with responsibility for all matters concerning *operations, plans, and training*.

- Prepares plans and orders
- Recommends organization for combat
- Integrates fire, maneuver and other tactical capabilities - “Battlefield Operating Systems”
- Plans tactical troop movements
- Schedules training
- Organizes and conducts exercises/other training events
- Manages the toe

The S3/G3 is usually the third-most senior officer in the unit, second only to the commander and the executive officer. The S3/G3 is the tactician of the unit. The S3/G2 creates the plans to fight the enemy and coordinates with the executive officer and other staff sections to ensure that their respective sections can support the plans. As such, the S3/G3 and S2/G3 work very closely together when preparing plans. Both sections form the nucleus of the unit’s field headquarters, the Tactical Operations Center (TOC).

The S3/G3 is also responsible for scheduling, planning, resourcing, and organizing training in conjunction with dictated requirements and the commander’s guidance. Oftentimes the S3/G3 is the master troubleshooter when “de-conflicting” scheduling or resource problems.

S4/G4, Logistics (or “Supply”) Officer, CTCP, ALOC

The S4/G4 is the fourth principal staff officer. The S4/G4 is the principal staff officer with responsibility for all matters *concerning supply, transportation, equipment maintenance and non-personnel related services*.

- Determines supply requirements
- Monitors, procurement, storage & distribution of supplies
- Recommends allocation & priorities
- Monitors and analyzes equipment maintenance status
- Coordinates transportation of personnel, equipment and supplies
- Plans administrative troop movements
- Provides food service, fire protection, construction

The S4/G4 ensures that the unit has all the food, fuel, ammunition, or other supplies (from toilet paper to repair parts) and services (like laundry or graves registration) it needs to stay combat effective. The S4/G4 also meticulously tracks the maintenance and repair status of major combat weapons systems, plans and coordinates unit movements, and recommends supply distribution priorities (*who-gets-what* and *who-gets-how-much*). Imagine the magnitude of this job, for example, in simply providing three meals a day for each of the approximately 18,000 soldiers in a heavy division.

The S1/G1 and S4/G4 often overlap in their functions and must coordinate closely with each other. They often form a Combat Trains Command Post (CTCP) or an Administrative-Logistics Center (ALOC) specifically designed for tracking logistical and personnel functions.

S5/G5, Civil-Military Operations (or “Civil Affairs”) Officer

The S5/G5 is the principal staff officer with responsibility for all matters concerning the relationship of military operations and *civilian populations*.

- Civilian impact on military operations
- Political, economic and social effects of military operations on civilian populations
- Relationship among military forces, civil authorities, and people within an area of operations

Most units at battalion and brigade level do not normally have an assigned (or authorized) S5. An S5 is provided to the units upon deployment into an operational area. Division and higher levels have a full-time G5 section. Most S5s come from special Civil Affairs units, of which nearly all are Army Reserve units.

If a TOE unit is deployed on a real-world contingency mission (such as to Bosnia), the unit will receive its S5/G5 section as an attachment from a Civil Affairs unit. Once attached, this section will fulfill duties as outlined above.

This section will help the unit commander manage civilian-military interface problems, such as refugee relocation, relief supply distribution, medical support for civilians on the battlefield, or liaison with special organizations such as a food distribution or relief organizations.

Special Staff Group

The special staff is a core of subject matter experts in focused technical and combat-critical functions that is flexible in organization and composition. They can represent:

- A specific area of concern -
 - communications (signal officer)
 - maintenance (motor officer)
 - spiritual support (chaplain)
 - medical core (surgeon)
- A battlefield operating system -
 - fire support officer - fire support
 - unit engineer
 - mobility / countermobility

One of the special staff officers is the communications and electronics (or “signal”) officer who is responsible for all matters involving military *communications*.

- Correct radio frequency distribution and allotment for:
 - FM, HF/AM, and UHF/VHF radios
 - satellite up- and down-links
- Correct voice and data encryption “keys”
- Vital information for global positioning systems
- Establishment of field computer networks (lans and wans)
- Back-up systems and routing for electronic communications
- “Old-fashioned” systems, such as couriers, wire, or other eye-and-ear systems (smoke, flare, or whistles)

The communications and electronics officer must ensure that the unit can send and receive signals, radio messages, and data quickly, efficiently, and through multiple paths, if necessary. This staff position is being moved to the Coordinating Staff as the S6/G6 under emerging signal doctrine.

Normally, a battalion or brigade special staff group will also consist of a Chemical Officer, a Maintenance (or Motor) Officer, a Surgeon, and a Chaplain. Each of these special staff officers may or may not have a small staff as well.

The special staff will usually be augmented by attachments that fill other special needs in combat or training exercises, such as a Fire Support Officer, an Engineer Officer, an Air Defense Officer, and an Air Force Liaison Officer. The attachment of these individuals may be very temporary or semi-permanent in nature.

Often, a special staff officer is also the commander or leader of an attached unit. When an engineer battalion is in direct support of a maneuver brigade, the engineer battalion commander is also “dual-hatted” as the brigade engineer officer. The same is true for the Artillery Battalion Commander in direct support of a maneuver brigade; who becomes the brigade fire support coordination officer.

Personal Staff

The personal staff group is a type of special staff group that works directly for the unit commander.

- A command sergeant major (*all S and G staffs*)
- May have the following:
 - staff judge advocate (lawyer) (*brigade staff and all G staffs*)
 - inspector general (*G staffs only*)
 - aides de camp (*G staffs only*)
 - miscellaneous others (foreign officers, agents) (*any staff depending on the situation*)

The personal staff has special direct access to the commander and other areas of the command through the authority the commander gives it. They may or may not have to work with other staff sections or the chief-of-staff.

Personal staff members take care of specialized needs high-level commanders may have to help oversee a particular area of the command or help control different parts of the unit (in the case of assistant commanders).

One always-present personal staff member is the Command Sergeant Major

Command Sergeant Major (CSM)

The senior enlisted member...

- Advises commander & staff on matters concerning enlisted personnel (the bulk of the unit)
- Executes policies and standards on performance, individual training, appearance and conduct of all soldiers
- Maintains communications with subordinate units noncommissioned officers and enlisted soldiers
- Provides counsel and guidance to noncommissioned officers and enlisted soldiers



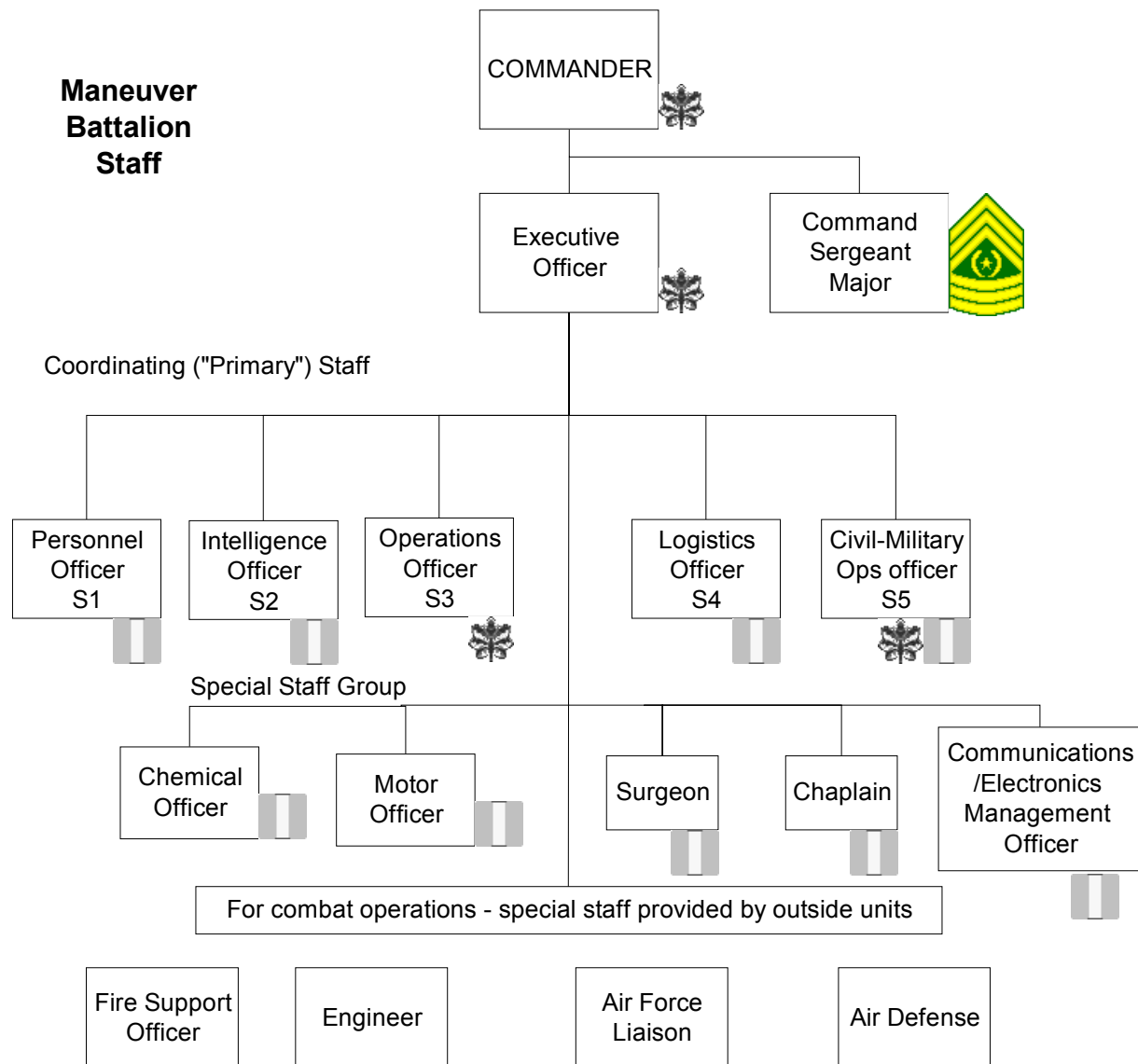
At battalion level and higher, every commander has a command sergeant major. If the staff is considered to be the brains of a unit, the CSM is considered to be the unit's heart and soul.

The CSM is the senior enlisted member of the unit and often has been in the Army longer than many of the unit's members. As such, the CSM has a unique perspective on the personal impacts the soldiers will feel in regard to a commander's decision or a staff's plan of action. In regards to the CSM's relationship with the other staff sections, the commander may require close coordination with each staff section or give the CSM unrestricted access to the entire unit, with the latter being the most common and preferred technique.

The CSM is often the one confidant the commander has as a sounding board or personal advisor on unit or soldier matters. The CSM is in a unique position to always "state his mind" to the commander as well. It is not unusual for a staff to unanimously recommend a course of action to a commander, only to have the commander reject it based upon the advice of his CSM.

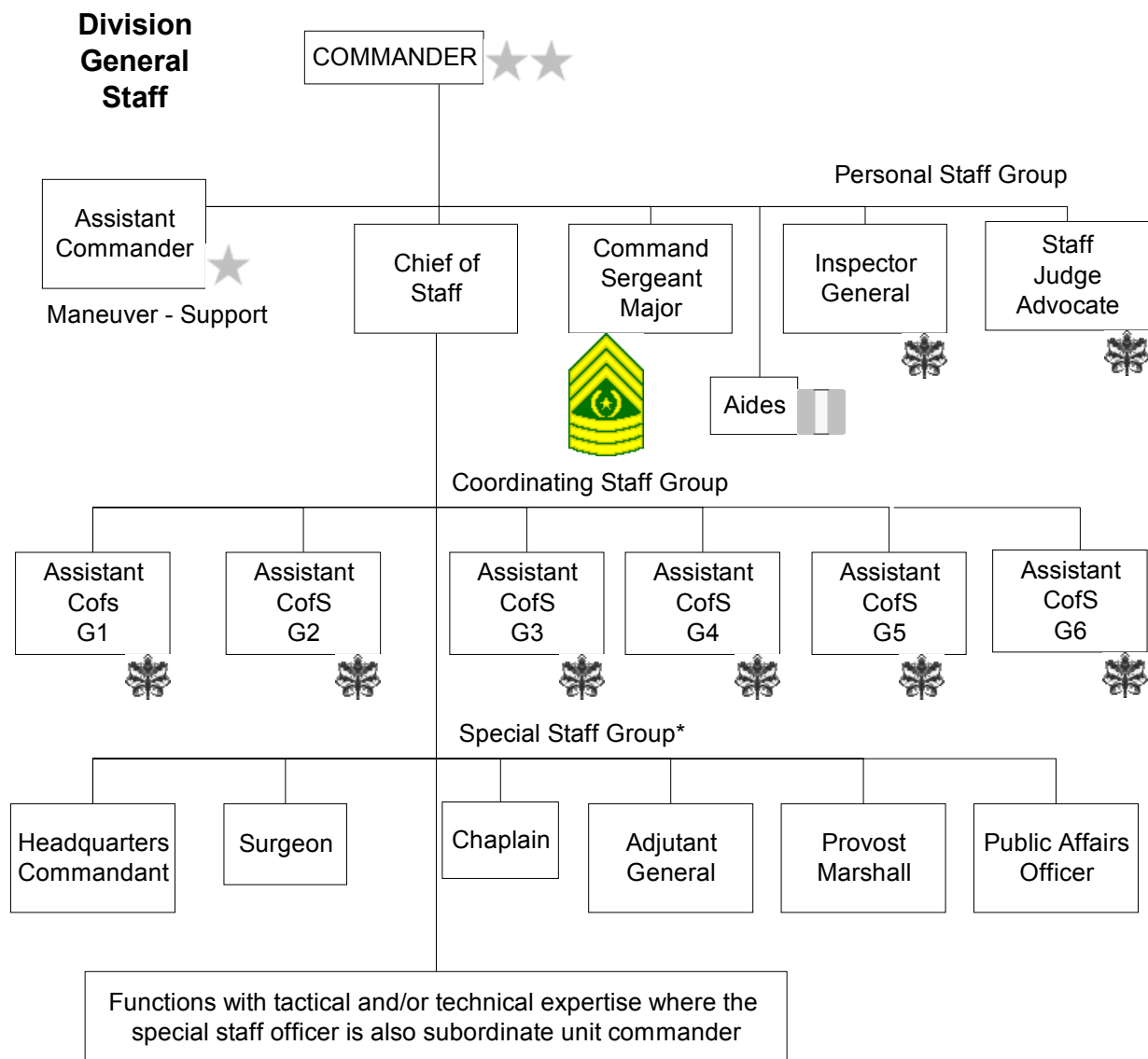
Battalion Staff / Brigade Staff

When you assemble the entire organization, the typical wire-diagram for a maneuver battalion's staff is as shown below, with their corresponding military ranks of the key individual in the section:



A brigade's staff is very similar in organization and structure, with the major difference being the size of each staff section and the rank of each section's officer-in-charge.

Division General Staff



*Note: Many special staff sections are not listed here. Each Assistant Chief of Staff (CofS) has special staff group members to perform subordinate tasks.

At division and higher-level staffs (the general staffs), the organization is much larger and more diverse. In fact, general staff officers wear a special insignia to further identify them as general staff officers.

While the core functions remain the same, the personal and special staff expand dramatically -- an indication of how complex the organization's tasks can be.

Additionally, just like at battalion-level staffs, often special staff officers or advisors are dual-hatted as subordinate element commanders. The absence of a G6 is made-up by the fact that the signal battalion commander fills the G6's function as chief signal coordinator.

Joint Task Force (JTF), "J"-Staff

Staffs exist at every echelon from battalion on up.

We've discussed the battalion through the division staff, but for Army-specific combat units, the staff structure exists as high as the command level, each staff being specially tailored for its mission.

New types of staffs have emerged with the pooling of service-specific (Army, Navy, Air Force and/or Marine) units into a larger force with diverse functions. When this is done, a Joint Task Force (or JTF) is formed much in the same way a unit will task-organize itself, just on a much grander scale. (The word "joint" refers to multi-service operations.)

When this is done, an existing headquarters is modified or a new headquarters is created from personnel representing each service's unique contribution to the JTF. To denote this staff's uniqueness, the letter "J" precedes any other staff identification (e.g. J1, J2, J3, etc.)